

Creating “Smart Farms” with Broadband Connectivity

Broadband connectivity is transforming 21st-century farming, revolutionizing on-the-ground operations and allowing farmers to manage their businesses more effectively. Today's farmers use Internet-enabled tools both in and out of the field to save time, money and natural resources. Broadband benefits agriculture by:

- **Employing precision agriculture to increase yields and profits.** Precision agriculture uses technology to compile data for farmers so that they can operate more efficiently, better manage production costs, enhance the growing process and increase profits.
- **Facilitating machine to machine communication (M2M).** M2M farm applications and solutions strengthen farm productivity by promoting better inventory control, reducing inefficient routes, facilitating machine maintenance and repair and expediting the ordering of parts and services.
- **Accessing real-time information.** Extending mobile broadband service to the cab of the farm vehicle allows farmers to access critical information beyond just weather forecasts — farmers can even video or teleconference with agriculture experts to show specific issues with crops or implement new harvesting techniques.
- **Expanding the customer base.** With high speed connections, farmers can advertise and sell their goods to a wider market, connecting with new customers beyond their traditional communities.

To learn more about how broadband is impacting agricultural practices and why it is important, join BroadbandUSA for this month's Practical Conversations Webinar: How Broadband Is Transforming Agriculture. Click [here](#) to register.

To learn more about how broadband can benefit your community, contact us at broadbandusa@ntia.doc.gov or 202-482-2048 to connect with BroadbandUSA technical assistance staff.

Broadband News and Updates

Federal News

- [NTIA is requesting comments on promoting stakeholder action against botnets and automated threats](#)
- [NTIA Administrator-nominee David Redl appeared before the Senate Commerce Committee for his confirmation hearing](#)
- [The FCC announced its intent to establish a Federal Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment](#)
- [The FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau announced an updated list of census blocks eligible for Connect America Phase II support and deadlines for updates in price cap and rate-of-return areas](#)
- [The FCC is seeking comment on ways to accelerate deployment of next generation networks in multiple tenant buildings](#)
- [DOT is soliciting solutions and suggestions on ways to improve government permitting](#)

State News

- [Maryland Governor Hogan announced the creation of a Rural Broadband Office](#)
- [Rural portions of Illinois, Iowa, Texas and California are receiving USDA loans to help provide broadband service](#)
- [National Regulatory Research Institute \(NRRI\) releases new report: Broadband Availability and Adoption: A State Perspective](#)

Funding Opportunities

- [The Department of Commerce announced \\$30 million is available to assist coal communities](#)
- [The application window for the Rural Utilities Service \(RUS\) Distance Learning and Telemedicine grant program is open](#)
- [The NSF and Mozilla are partnering to give away \\$2 million in prizes for innovative wireless technology](#)
- [Charter Communications launched a \\$1 million grant program to support digital education](#)
- [Michael Bloomberg announced a 3-year \\$200 million American Cities Initiative](#)

Stakeholder Resources

- [The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies released its “5G, Smart Cities & Communities of Color” report](#)
- [Connected Nation released a new Technology Action Plan](#)

Other News

- [ICANN announced its Global Indigenous Ambassador Program](#)
- [ConnectHome is expanding to more than 100 communities](#)
- [Municipal governments across the country are finding that cross-departmental collaboration is increasingly vital to digital inclusion](#)
- [Rural communities are facing economic impacts from inadequate broadband connections](#)

New Broadband Resources

BroadbandUSA published *What Speed Do You Need?* to help community members learn the minimum download speed requirements for their local institutions. Communities with existing broadband connectivity can use this infographic to quickly determine if their institutions have the speeds that they need, and communities seeking to enhance broadband access can understand baseline speed requirements. Click [here](#) to access this new resource.

BroadbandUSA also released an updated version of *BroadbandUSA: Guide to Federal Funding of Broadband Projects*. This guide helps answer questions from communities on how to access federal funding to support broadband planning, public access, digital literacy, adoption and deployment. Click [here](#) to access this resource.

BroadbandUSA Spotlight

Smart & Resilient Cities interviewed BroadbandUSA's Jean Rice on best practices and challenges for cities looking to improve their broadband infrastructure. Ms. Rice highlighted the importance of engaging stakeholders, setting clear goals and leveraging partnerships in successful broadband projects. Read the full interview [here](#).

Webinars

BroadbandUSA Practical Broadband Conversations Webinar Series

Topic: How Broadband Is Transforming Agriculture

Date: Wednesday, July 19 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. EDT

Overview: Broadband is enabling a revolution in agriculture practices, leading to “Smart Farms” that maximize resources by using information technology, mobile phones, apps and the Internet. Join the BroadbandUSA conversation on how broadband can help create new generation farms and farmers. Click [here](#) to register.

Events

NTIA Events

July 19, 2017
BroadbandUSA Practical Conversations: How Broadband Is Transforming Agriculture
BroadbandUSA will host the next webinar in its Broadband Practical Conversation series. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Events of Interest

July 11, 2017
Blandin Foundation Digital Inclusion Webinar
BroadbandUSA's Emy Tseng will participate in the webinar. Click [here](#) to learn more.

July 13-16, 2017
National Governors Association (NGA) Summer Meeting
NGA will host its annual Summer Meeting in Providence, RI. Click [here](#) to learn more.

July 21-24, 2017
National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference and Exposition
BroadbandUSA will host an exhibition at NACo's Annual Conference in Columbus, OH. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Policy Corner

The FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau released updated Form 477 data on fixed broadband deployment as of June 30, 2016. Users can download data on where providers report offering fixed broadband service. Click [here](#) to read more.

Contact Us

If you are interested in receiving technical assistance, email broadbandusa@ntia.doc.gov or call 202-482-2048. For more information, visit our website at www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandusa.

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